

5 Ways to Support Parents When Their Child Comes Out as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender

1. **Give them time to get used to the idea.** Support parents who may be struggling with feelings of loss, shame, fear, confusion, or sadness.
2. **Remind them that this child is the same person they have always loved,** and help them focus on that love and their desire to keep their child safe.
3. **Reassure them that they did not do anything wrong** or 'make' their child gay.
4. **Let them know that their child's decision to be open and honest with them is a sign** of the love, trust, and commitment the child has in/to their relationship.
5. **Refer them to the local chapter of Parents, Friends, and Families of LGBT People (PFLAG)** or to the national PFLAG website, www.pflag.org.

This card is a collaboration of **The GLBT Youth Support Project (GLYS)**, a program of **HCSM, Inc., and Greater Boston PFLAG**.
GLYS: www.hcsm.org/glys.htm * Greater Boston PFLAG: www.gbpflag.org

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5 Things Parents of GLBT Children Should Know

1. This is not a phase – studies show that most boys know their sexual orientation at age twelve, and most girls know at age fifteen.
2. Homosexuality cannot be 'cured', and it is not a choice. The American Medical Association and The American Psychological Association both take the position that it is unethical to try to 'change' someone's sexual orientation because it is not an illness or disease.
3. Most youth who are able to accept their sexuality or gender identity say they feel calmer, happier, and more confident. Parents can help their children feel proud of who they are.
4. Young people who have at least one trustworthy and supportive adult in their life are more likely to make healthy choices and stay in school.
5. There is help and support for parents who are struggling to support and advocate for their child during this process. PFLAG (www.pflag.org) can provide this support to parents.

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